



Photo by Todd Berenger

Commander in chief visits Kirtland AFB

President George W. Bush returns a salute from Tech. Sgt. Blair E. Diederich when the president met TEAM KIRTLAND members during a visit to New Mexico this week. Diederich, 58th Maintenance Operations Squadron, is the 58th Special Operations Wing Noncommissioned Officer of the Year. Also meeting the President are from the left: Senior Airman Lona Conrad, 377th Medical Operations Squadron, an Operation Iraqi Freedom returnee; Senior Airman John J. Zaimis, 58th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, an Operation Iraqi Freedom returnee; Diederich; Tech. Sgt. Gary Kaczmarek, 377th Air Base Wing, the Kirtland AFB Noncommissioned Officer of the Year; and Chief Master Sgt. Audrey Thompson, 377th Air Base Wing command chief master sergeant. Also meeting President Bush were: Ernestina Ripberger, 58th Op-

erations Group, the 58th Special Operations Wing Civilian of the Year; Staff Sgt. Cara J. McQueen, 377th Aerospace Medicine Squadron, a Operation Iraqi Freedom returnee ; Airman 1st Class Zachary D. Henderson, 898th Munitions Squadron, Air Force Materiel Command Airman of the Year; and Staff Sgt. James H. Eberhart Jr., 898th Munitions Squadron, the 377th Air Base Wing Noncommissioned Officer of the Year. Describing the experience meeting the President, Conrad said, "I am very privileged to have been selected to meet our president. It was humbling to have someone in his position thank me for my contribution in Operation Iraqi Freedom...after meeting him, I was shaking for a while because he is so powerful." Conrad serves as a Life Skills Support Center technician and supported Operation Iraqi Freedom.

President intends to nominate Roche for Army post

WASHINGTON (AFPN) — President George W. Bush announced May 7 his intention to nominate Secretary of the Air Force Dr. James G. Roche to become the next secretary of the Army.

Roche, who became secretary of the Air Force June 1, 2001, said he is

deeply honored, adding that he will work hard to justify the nomination, should Congress approve it.

"I am deeply honored that President (George W.) Bush has announced his intention to nominate me as the next secretary of the Army," he said.

"Should the nomination proceed to the Senate and should I be confirmed for this position, I will spare no effort to justify the confidence and trust the president and Secretary (of Defense Donald) Rumsfeld have placed in me."

Roche served as corporate vice

president and president of the Electric Sensors and Systems Sector of the Northrop Grumman Corporation before moving to the Air Force. He is a 23-year veteran of the U.S. Navy.

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